



Henri Nouwen, who died on September 21, 1996, is considered one of the great spiritual masters of the 20th century. He had touched many people as a priest, pastor, lecturer, friend, and, above all, writer. He wrote books that are now considered spiritual classics—*Clowning in Rome*, *Genesee Diary*, *In Memoriam*, *The Wounded Healer*, *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. America's former First Lady and senator, Hillary Rodham Clinton, once said that *The Return of the Prodigal Son* topped her list of spiritual reading.

Henri was a passionate, intimate, restless, and charismatic soul. He could easily inspire people, giving large audiences hopeful message about their ultimate belovedness in God, yet he knew moments of emptiness and frailty. His friends were aware of this, and so they gave him support, allowing him personal contacts, at the same time protecting his privacy and writing time. A close friend, Robert Jonas, shares in *Henri Nouwen: Selected Writings* that in 1995, Henri spent a part of his sabbatical year in his house. His family provided a room for him where after breakfast, he would write his journals. Robert enrolled him in a local health club for exercise. In the afternoon, Henri would write and attend to his correspondence. His stay with them, Robert writes, was a wonderful and sometimes dizzying experience because Henri was such a special figure.

The Jonas family may be compared to the wealthy woman and her husband who offer hospitality to Elisha whenever he passes by *Shunem* (First Reading). The woman is generous as well as discreet, for she does not

THE REWARD OF *Hospitality*



by Fr. Gil A. Alinsangan, SSP

overwhelm the prophet with her admiration, her excessive attention, or her own sorrow (for not having a child). This is complemented by Elisha's own gentle behavior. He knows that his hosts' generosity is directed to God. He is discreet

as to their private life, and when he desires to express his thankfulness, he asks his servant to advise him in this matter.

The woman and her husband are rewarded with "a prophet's reward:" the promise of a baby son. Robert and his family, on the other hand, count themselves blessed for the gift of friendship of an extraordinary person, Henri Nouwen. Henri loved to send gifts to his friends, and Robert's son Sam would receive little packages mailed by Henri from the airports as he travelled from place to place.

In the Discourse on the Mission of which today's Gospel is part, Jesus tells us to receive a disciple whom he sends as if he were Jesus himself. Here Jesus identifies himself with every missionary. But then Jesus does not just identify himself with every prophet or every just person—an Elisha or a Henri. He identifies himself with all, be they the least, or people in whom it is difficult to see any identification with him. To give a single glass of water to one of the little ones (without standing or capacity to pay back) will not go unrewarded.

Nowadays, people are wary of almsgiving and hospitality. We are afraid that instead of helping "discreet" people, we may end up being abused or victimized by professional beggars. Still, we must remember that hospitality is at the heart of true discipleship. And the Lord reminds us that the door of the Kingdom will be opened or closed according to what we have done or failed to do for those who were hungry or thirsty, who were strangers or naked, sick or imprisoned: "Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me" (Mt 25:40).

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

(Ps 47 [46]:2)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

**All peoples, clap your hands.
Cry to God with shouts of joy!**

Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

P—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All—And with your spirit.

Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

P—Today's Gospel challenges us to make a firm commitment to the Lord. The cost of following Jesus is high: Jesus claims priority over the most important things in our lives, including family and self. Yet by dying to self and losing everything else for the sake of Jesus and the Gospel, we will surely find life. As St. Paul puts it, "If we have died with Christ, we shall also live with him."

Penitential Rite

P—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.
(Pause)

P—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

All—Christ, have mercy.

P—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

All—Lord, have mercy.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen.

Gloria

All—Glory to God in the

highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father. Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us. For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

Collect

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

O God, who through the grace of adoption chose us to be children of light, grant, we pray, that we may not be wrapped in the darkness of error but always be seen to stand in the bright light of truth.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD



First Reading

(2 Kgs 4:8–11, 14–16a) *(Sit)*

Elisha, the prophet of God, is given hospitality by a woman of Shunem, and the woman's generosity is rewarded with the gift of a son.

A reading from the second Book of Kings

ONE day Elisha came to Shunem, where there was a woman of influence, who urged him to dine with her. Afterward, whenever he passed by, he used to stop there to dine. So she said to her husband, "I know that Elisha is a holy man of God. Since he visits us often, let us arrange a little room on the

roof and furnish it for him with a bed, table, chair, and lamp, so that when he comes to us he can stay there." Sometime later Elisha arrived and stayed in the room overnight.

Later Elisha asked, "Can something be done for her?" His servant Gehazi answered, "Yes! She has no son, and her husband is getting on in years." Elisha said, "Call her." When the woman had been called and stood at the door, Elisha promised, "This time next year you will be fondling a baby son."

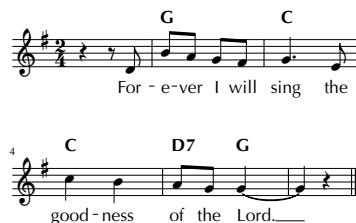
—The word of the Lord

All—Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm (Ps 89)

R—Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.

Sr. M.C.A Parco, fsp



1. The promises of the Lord I will sing forever,/ through all generations my mouth shall proclaim your faithfulness./ For you have said, "My kindness is established forever;"/ in heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness. **(R)**

2. Blessed the people who know the joyful shout;/ in the light of your countenance, O LORD, they walk./ At your name they rejoice all the day,/ and through your justice they are exalted. **(R)**

3. You are the splendor of their strength,/ and by your favor our horn is exalted./ For to the LORD belongs our shield,/ and the Holy One of Israel, our king. **(R)**

Second Reading

(Rom 6:3–4, 8–11)

The apostle Paul reminds us Christians that when we are immersed in the water of baptism, we die to our

sins, and when we rise from it, we rise to a new life in Christ.

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.

If, then, we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. We know that Christ, raised from the dead, dies no more; death no longer has power over him. As to his death, he died to sin once and for all; as to his life, he lives for God. Consequently, you too must think of yourselves as dead to sin and living for God in Christ Jesus.

—The word of the Lord.

All—Thanks be to God.

Alleluia (1 Pt 2:9) (*Stand*)

All—Alleluia, alleluia. You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; announce the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel (Mt 10:37–42)

P—A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew

All—Glory to you, O Lord.

JESUS SAID to his apostles “Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. Whoever receives a prophet because

he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward. And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because the little one is a disciple—amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward.”

—The Gospel of the Lord

All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Homily (*Sit*)

Profession of Faith (*Stand*)

All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (at the words that follow, up to and including and became man, all bow) and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary and became man.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the

resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Faithful

P—Let us earnestly pray to God our Father that we may continually grow in our commitment to him and to our brothers and sisters. For every petition we say:

R—Lord, hear our prayer.

C—That the Church, your people, may live and preach the Gospel without compromise and never be ashamed of the redeeming cross of Christ, we pray: (**R**)

C—That those who serve our country may patiently bear the cross of serving selflessly for and with their constituents, we pray: (**R**)

C—That those suffering from injustice, poverty, sickness, and alienation may find generous people who will assist them in their need, we pray: (**R**)

C—That we may live our baptismal consecration, dying to our sinful inclinations and living with one another in peace, love, and mutual respect, we pray: (**R**)

C—That the dying be given comfort and the dead welcomed to their eternal reward with you in heaven, we pray: (**R**)

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community, those who are in need of our prayers and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: (**R**)

P—Almighty Father, make us worthy of your love. As we struggle to follow you, stay close to us and protect us.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.



Presentation of the Gifts
(*Stand*)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—O God, who graciously accomplish the effects of your mysteries, grant, we pray, that the deeds by which we serve you may be worthy of these sacred gifts.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface VI: The pledge of the eternal Passover

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal.

For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery.

And so, with all the Angels, we praise you, as in joyful celebration, we acclaim:

All—Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. *(Kneel)*

Acclamation *(Stand)*

All—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again.

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THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion
(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon
(Cf. Ps 103 [102]:1)

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all within me, his holy name.

Prayer after Communion
(Stand)

P—Let us pray. *(Pause)*

May this divine sacrifice we have offered and received fill us with life, O Lord, we pray, so that, bound to you in lasting charity, we may bear fruit that lasts for ever.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P—Bow down for the blessing.
(Pause)

May the God of all consolation order your days in his peace and grant you the gifts of his blessing.

All—Amen.

P—May he free you always from every distress and confirm your hearts in his love.

All—Amen.

P—So that on this life's journey you may be effective in good works, rich in the gifts of hope, faith and charity, and may come happily to eternal life.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (+) and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—The Mass has been offered. Go in the peace of Christ.

All—Thanks be to God.